

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

GEORGE MILLER

7TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

2205 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0507
(202) 225-2095

www.house.gov/georgemiller

DANIEL WEISS
CHIEF OF STAFF

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
SENIOR DEMOCRAT

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0507

February 8, 2006

BARBARA JOHNSON
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

1333 WILLOW PASS ROAD
SUITE 203
CONCORD, CA 94520
(925) 602-1880

3220 BLUME DRIVE
SUITE 281
RICHMOND, CA 94806
(510) 262-6500

375 G STREET
SUITE #1
VALLEJO, CA 94592
(707) 645-1888

TTY (202) 225-1904

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FEB 13 2006

SOLANO LAND TRUST

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
State Coastal Conservancy Governing Board
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in strong support of the \$500,000 grant request from the Solano Land Trust to build a Learning Center at Rush Ranch in Solano County.

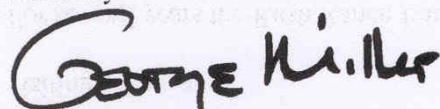
This Learning Center will cost approximately \$1,000,000, and the Trust has \$500,000 dedicated from the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR). Rush Ranch is an official NERR site. The Center will include a field lab, work space and living quarters for visiting scientists.

For several years the Rush Ranch Educational Council has been offering classes on Native Americans to school children once a week in the spring and fall, serving approximately 1,500 third graders each year. While many students come from local schools, in 2005 they also came from Napa, Travis, Dixon, Vallejo, Sonoma County, and American Canyon school districts. A new facility would allow classes two days a week.

Mike Muir, the great-grandson of John Muir, began a program called "Access Adventures" last year which allows wheelchair-bound individuals to enjoy rides in horse-driven carriages especially adapted for wheelchairs. This program will be expanded this year. Other activities at the Ranch include art workshops held by Solano College, programs offered by the Native Plant Society, nature walks, and regular blacksmith shop demonstrations. The proposed Learning Center will be more convenient and comfortable for indoor activities that are limited now when the weather is bad.

The Solano Land Trust is doing an outstanding job of managing Rush Ranch for the public and I urge your favorable consideration of this request.

Sincerely



GEORGE MILLER
Member of Congress
7th District, California

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Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

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SUBCOMMITTEE #3, CHAIR
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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
VETERANS AFFAIRS

STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 4081
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 445-3375
(916) 323-6958 FAX

California State Senate

SENATOR
WESLEY CHESBRO
SECOND SENATORIAL DISTRICT



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FORESTRY
MOBILE & MANUFACTURED
HOMES
RURAL EDUCATION

February 7, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco,
Chairman, Governing Board
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

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FEB 16 2006

SOLANO LAND TRUST

RE: Grant Request for the Solano Land Trust - Rush Ranch Learning Center

Dear Mr. Bosco,


I am requesting that the California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors approve \$500,000 in funding to assist the Solano Land Trust in building a learning center at Rush Ranch Open Space.

Countless community groups, school children and members of the public utilize this historic site throughout the year. Rush Ranch currently features a visitor center, blacksmith shop, historical ranching equipment, hiking trails, and birding opportunities. They sponsor a yearly open house each spring that is attended by several hundred people. In addition, they sponsor educational programs during the spring and fall which are attended by over 2,000 school children.

The construction and development of a learning center would greatly enhance their capacity to serve the community. The new center will consist of a classroom with seating for up to forty (with a food preparation area and outside deck), a covered area with fire pit, some office space, visiting scientists overnight quarters, a caretaker's residence, and inside bathrooms. Half of the construction costs have already been acquired from the SF Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. However, an additional \$500,000 is still needed to make this center a reality.

I appreciate the great work Solano Land Trust has done to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. I thank you and the Conservancy Board for your favorable consideration of this project.

Sincerely


WESLEY CHESBRO
Second Senatorial District

WC/bo
444 GEORGIA STREET
VALLEJO, CA 94590
TEL (707) 648-5312
FAX (707) 648-5383

50 D STREET, SUITE 120A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
TEL (707) 576-2771
FAX (707) 576-2773

710 E STREET, SUITE 150
EUREKA, CA 95501
TEL (707) 445-6508
FAX (707) 445-6511

1040 MAIN STREET, SUITE 205
NAPA, CA 94559
TEL (707) 224-1990
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Vacaville, CA 95688
(707) 455-8025
Fax (707) 455-0490

Email
assemblymember.wolk@assembly.ca.gov

Website
<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a08>

Assembly California Legislature



LOIS WOLK
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, EIGHTH DISTRICT

Chair
Water, Parks and Wildlife
Committee
Budget
Natural Resources
Local Government
Subcommittee
Budget Subcommittee on Transportation and
Information Technology
Select Committee
Water, Infrastructure and the Economy

February 15, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco, Chairman
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am writing in support of the grant request by the Solano Land Trust to build a learning center at the Rush Ranch Open Space.

Outdoor programs like the one at Rush Ranch provide a unique opportunity for students to experience firsthand the natural wonder of the San Francisco Bay Area. The proposed project would benefit both the Land Trust and the Conservancy. It would significantly improve the quality of the programs offered at Rush Ranch, and it would help to fulfill the Conservancy's mission of keeping the coast pristine and accessible.

I appreciate the opportunity to support the Solano Land Trust in their efforts to secure this grant funding. If I can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (707) 455-8025.

Sincerely,

LOIS WOLK
Assemblywoman, 8th AD

LW:ap

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Romberg Tiburon Center, 3152 Paradise Drive, Tiburon, CA 94920-1205
Tel (415) 338-3703 Fax (415) 435-7120



February 27, 2006

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California Coastal Conservancy
11th floor, 1330 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco:

I write to you today to express my enthusiastic support of the application of the Solano Land Trust for funds from the Conservancy to enable the building of the Nature Center and other facilities planned for their Rush Ranch property. It is a truly exciting project that has many benefits.

As you may know, Rush Ranch is part of the federally designated San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (SF Bay NERR). The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is a network of 26 protected areas established for long-term research, education and stewardship. This partnership program between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the coastal states protects more than one million acres of estuarine land and water, provides essential habitat for wildlife; offers educational opportunities for students, teachers and the public; and serves as living laboratories for scientists. SF Bay NERR is a partnership among the Solano Land Trust, San Francisco State University, California State Parks, Bay Conservation and Development Commission and NOAA.

The SF Bay NERR uses the Rush Ranch site for our research, education and stewardship programs. As part of our developing monitoring program, we will deploy three scientific instruments for continuous monitoring of water quality and weather parameters at Rush Ranch. Our Research Coordinator also works closely with the Solano Land Trust to coordinate the multitude of research projects within the marsh. In addition to using Rush Ranch as a field trip site for workshops, our Education Coordinator is an active member of the Rush Ranch Education Council. We also collaborate with Ken Poerner of the Solano Land Trust on stewardship issues. All of these programs will most certainly benefit from having improved facilities at Rush Ranch. For example, the new facility will allow us to host the lecture and field trip components of our coastal decision-maker workshops at the site.

We are excited about building our partnership with the Solano Land Trust. I wholeheartedly endorse this application for funding. I'd be happy to provide further information to assist you, so please feel free to call me at (415) 338-3703. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jaime C. Kooser, Ph.D.
Reserve Manager

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

Michael Muir
Access Adventure
5190 Gordon Valley Road
Fairfield, CA 94534

February 10, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612


Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am very pleased to learn that the Solano Land Trust is in the process of building a learning center at Rush Ranch Open Space. Access Adventure, a program promoting open space and wilderness recreation for people with disabilities began at the Rush Ranch in July of last year. We use wheelchair accessible horsedrawn carriages to carry people with mobility challenges out to enjoy the natural world. This program was an immediate success and is growing rapidly. Operating from April through October, we finished the season with 49 riders in our final week of last year. Our riders at open events number in the hundreds.

Access Adventure has acquired two new vehicles and a growing support system in the California equestrian community. We are poised to serve a growing constituency in the coming season. A learning center would have an important impact on our program at the Rush Ranch. We would use the classroom for training sessions with our volunteers, educational opportunities to enhance our clients appreciation of this preserved open space, and for special events staged for equestrians and the community of people with disabilities. A food preparation area, and accessible bathrooms are another asset for us. The enhanced facilities should allow Access Adventure to adequately serve a greater number of people. We would expect at least 400 more visitors to Rush Ranch.

The Solano Land Trust has provided an outstanding opportunity for Access Adventure to serve our community. The important work of protecting farmland and open space in Solano county deserves our support. Please feel free to contact me at (707) 426-3990, or via email: stonewallmike@hotmail.com , if you require any additional information. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Michael Muir, Director
Access Adventure

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCES
MAIL STOP 1
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
ONE SHIELDS AVE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8780
TELEPHONE: 530-752-1703
FAX: 530-752-4361

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

8 March 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco,
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco:

My apologies for being late with this letter. I have been taking an upper division plant ecology class to Rush Ranch annually for the past decade. I usually talk to the class in the picnic area about the history of the area and about the objectives of our walk through the marsh. If there were an inside space large enough to accommodate 50 students, my pre-walk presentation would be much more effective.

After the walk we generally have a quiz about plants seen and ecological topics. Again, an indoors place to hold this quiz would improve student learning.

There is no site closer to UC Davis to take students to see a brackish marsh ecosystem, and the fact that the Suisun Marsh is the largest example of such an ecosystem in all of California only makes it more attractive. Over this past decade I've seen many small but important improvements in accessibility and visitor services, but what is being proposed in the Coastal Conservancy grant proposal is an order or two of magnitude greater in its potential impact on educating a much larger number of people.

Although I've focused my comments on classroom availability if the grant is funded, I am very keen about the provision of office space for a visiting scientist. I would invite such a person to speak to my class, and that invitation would be extended based on my experiences with this class elsewhere, when I included a local expert in the day's outing. The students are very responsive to hearing from someone other than their instructor (me), because they correctly surmise that guest lecturers bring a different perspective and a depth that I can't provide.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michael G. Barbour".

Michael G. Barbour
Professor of Plant Ecology
University of California, Davis

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MAR 13 2006

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY WILLIS L. JEPSON CHAPTER

January 13, 2006

To Solano Land Trust:

We, the Willis Jepson Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, enthusiastically support the construction of a classroom and ancillary facilities at Rush Ranch. The mission of CNPS is to increase understanding and appreciation of native plants and conserve their habitats through science and education and related activities. The Ranch contains the largest block of undisturbed habitat left within the Suisun Marsh and is home to several rare plants. And, Rush Ranch has easily accessible, year-round public access for visitors to learn about and enjoy Suisun Marsh and its wide variety of habitats, from tidal wetlands to uplands.

The Willis Jepson of CNPS has utilized and volunteered at Solano Land Trust's Rush Ranch since the chapter's earliest days. The proposed classrooms and improved facilities at Rush Ranch would allow our volunteers to expand their efforts. We envision holding club meetings and educational lectures at the site. We are even more excited about the possibility of expanding our ecological education program for school children – grades 1-12. And, since many of our members participate in our native plant propagation program, we look forward to having the opportunity to participate in habitat restoration efforts at Rush Ranch. We currently collect native plant seed at Rush Ranch. However, our nursery facilities are in Benicia and Vallejo. If modest nursery facilities are made available at Rush Ranch, CNPS can supply appropriate plant materials for local habitat restoration projects.

In conclusion, the Willis Jepson Chapter of CNPS strongly supports the efforts of Solano Land Trust to improve the educational facilities at Rush Ranch. It is a very special place in Solano County and in California.

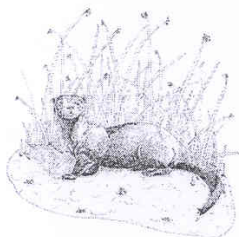
Sincerely,



Ms. Rebecca Mannion, President
Willis L. Jepson Chapter, CNPS

P.O. BOX 2212 • BENICIA, CA • 94510
PHONE: 707 429-2494
WWW.CNPSJEPSONCHAPTER.ORG

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



Suisun Marsh Natural History Association

1171 Kellogg Street * Suisun, CA 94585 * (707) 429-4295

3/1/06

TO: Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

FROM:
Ms. Monique Liguori
Executive Director
Suisun Marsh Natural History Association
1171 Kellogg Street
Suisun, CA 94585

Dear Mr. Bosco,

The Suisun Marsh Natural History Association is very pleased that the Solano Land Trust is in the process of building a learning Center at Rush Ranch. In 2001, the trails on Peytonia Ecological Reserve, where our organization leads marsh field trips, were burned to the ground in the spring. This left us without a fall location for our trips, which serve 7-8,000 third grade and other students annually. The Solano Land Trust extended the privilege of allowing us to use their trails, which enabled us to continue to provide our students with education on the Suisun Marsh. Approximately 500 students accompanied our docents to the Rush Ranch for field trips in 2001.

We also hold natural history classes for our members and the public, and at this time we do not have a classroom facility for several of these events. We would be able to utilize the classroom to offer these events, with the benefit of having bathroom and other facilities available. We would envision possibly having four or five classes there annually, with enrollment of 20-30 or more, bringing at least 150 more visitors to Rush Ranch.

Our organization is grateful for the fine work Solano Land Trust has done to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. We strongly support their efforts to create a learning center to further benefit the citizens of Solano County. I can be reached at (707) 429-4295 if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Monique Liguori

Monique Liguori, Executive Director

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COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

350 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 900
Oakland, CA 94612-2016

t. 510.452.9261
f. 510.452.9266

www.savethebay.org

January 23, 2005

Marilyn Farley, Executive Director
Solano Land Trust
1001 Texas Street Suite C
Fairfield, CA 94533

Dear Ms. Farley:

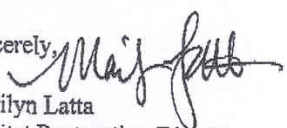
Save The Bay is pleased to write a letter in support of the Solano Land Trust, a partner in the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) grant proposal to enhance the Rush Ranch site educational and visitor facilities. Rush Ranch is a unique mix of habitats in the San Francisco Bay Delta, and is a wonderful public access and environmental education site for Bay Area residents to learn about aquatic and terrestrial environments and local estuarine and cultural history.

Save The Bay's Education Programs, including our student Canoes in Sloughs program and adult Discover the Bay program have used the Rush Ranch site as a launch for our on-the-water environmental education programs. This partnership has been very beneficial for Save The Bay, and the site is one of the only launch sites we use in the Carquinez Straits. The site is rich with environmental resources, a mix of tidal salt marsh and upland habitats, and cultural history that all provide a wonderful outdoor classroom for students, teachers, and the general public to learn more about this part of the Bay. We have also used the site as part of a week-long summer biodiversity course in partnership with San Francisco State University. Our programs would most certainly benefit from enhanced educational facilities at the site.

Save The Bay can broaden the impact of our mission to celebrate, protect, and restore San Francisco Bay as a healthy and biologically diverse ecosystem, by supporting this proposal to enhance the educational facilities at Rush Ranch. We have enjoyed partnering with the recently formed NERR on educational programs and workshops for teachers and restoration science practitioners. Save The Bay is pleased that the NERR is developing their program in San Francisco Bay and more educational resources for the public that focus on the estuary, and we are excited about future partnership projects together. I wholeheartedly recommend this application for funding.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, at Save The Bay at 510.452.9261 x110 or email mlatta@savethebay.org.

Sincerely,


Marilyn Latta
Habitat Restoration Director
Save The Bay

SAVE THE BAY

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

SOLANO COUNTY WATER AGENCY



February 24, 2006

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
State Coastal Conservancy
1339 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

This letter is in support of a \$500,000 grant request to the State Coastal Conservancy to help the Solano Land Trust build a learning center at Rush Ranch in the Suisun Marsh. The Solano County Water Agency has collaborated with the Solano Land Trust on many projects, principally dealing with endangered species. We have partnered with them on some research projects and habitat enhancement projects including a survey for Suisun Thistle, a rare plant species, at Rush Ranch.

The Solano County Water Agency is preparing a countywide Habitat Conservation Plan for the protection of endangered species and will have a long-term commitment to management of preserves and to monitor, protect and enhance endangered species and their habitat. Rush Ranch is a key location where research is very valuable to our overall effort. The learning center will advance the objectives of our overall conservation program and we encourage you to grant Land Trust's request for funding

If you have any questions, please contact me at (707) 455-1103.

Sincerely,

David B. Okita
General Manager

A2.Douglas Bosco.let.doc

P.O. Box 349 • 6040 Vaca Station Road, Building 84
Elmira, California 95625-0349
Phone (707) 455-1100 • Fax (707) 451-6099
www.scwa2.com



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Bruce Wickland
District Biologist
Kristin Garrison
Biologist
Paul Garrison III
Water Manager
Vesta Thompson
Account Clerk
Mark Story
Lower Joice Island

**SUISUN RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**
2544 Grizzly Island Road
Suisun, CA 94585-9539
(707) 425-9302
(707) 425-4402 FAX
srcd@direcway.com

February 14th, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco,

The Suisun Resource Conservation District (SRCD) supports the efforts of the Solano Land Trust in building a learning center at Rush Ranch Open Space. The SRCD has been a long-time advocate of public use and educational programs at Rush Ranch. The SRCD represents private and public landowners in the Suisun Marsh on a variety of issues on Federal, State, and local levels. However, due to the constraints of the current facility, many times we have had to schedule public and agency meetings outside of the District. This facility would be a great asset to the marsh and significant benefit to the public and private landowners, agencies, and to the citizens in the surrounding communities.

We appreciate the great work Solano Land Trust has done to protect wetlands, farmland, and open space in Solano County and we support their continued effort to improve and expand the educational programs about the Suisun Marsh. I can be reached at (707) 425-9302 or schappell_srcd@direcway.com if you need any additional information.

Best regards,

Steven Chappell
Executive Director

Cc: SRCD Board of Director's

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

Date: February 28, 2006

TO: Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

FR: Jodie Salz
Solano Resource Conservation District
1170 N. Lincoln St. Suite 110
Dixon CA 95620

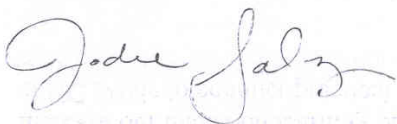
Dear Mr. Bosco:

All of us at the Solano Resource Conservation District are very excited to learn that the Solano Land Trust is in the process of building a learning center at Rush Ranch Open Space. The Solano Resource Conservation District currently supports several environmental education and research programs and the Solano Land Trust is one of our most valued partners. The Solano Resource Conservation District often uses Rush Ranch to enhance our education and research programs, as it provides an outdoor classroom for students of all ages. We also use Rush Ranch as a display area, where local landowners can see successful restoration and rotational grazing projects first hand.

A learning center at the site would substantially improve our ability to conduct our education and research programs at Rush Ranch. As an organization we have a goal to increase our hands-on learning programs and to provide more opportunities for students at UC Davis to conduct practical field research. We would most certainly utilize the classroom for pre-field work discussion sessions and the field lab would be very useful to any students working at the site. We anticipate that we would do at least one additional program each year, if the learning center is constructed, and potentially triple our past usage. This would translate into at least 30 more visitors for Rush Ranch.

We appreciate the great work Solano Land Trust has done to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. I can be reached at (707) 678-1655 x 109 if you need any additional information.

Respectfully,



Jodie Salz
Conservation Program Manager
Solano Resource Conservation District

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MAR 06 2006

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

RUSH RANCH EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL

1001 TEXAS STREET SUITE C
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533-0011



January 7, 2005

Ken Poerner
Solano Land Trust
1001 Texas St.
Suite C
Fairfield, CA 94533

Dear Ken:

You have asked me to make some suggestions as to how the proposed new building might be used in the docent programs on Rush Ranch. As you know our major program is a program on the culture of the Patwin Native Americans, which is given to mostly 3rd graders. Each year approximately 1,500 children participate on approximately 28 Tuesday mornings during both the fall and spring semesters. In addition to this we also have a number of other programs which are open to the public and are usually on Saturday mornings. These have included bird, flower and marsh walks, slide shows on wild flowers and also on native bees, star gazing, painting and poetry workshops, and of course our annual open house. We also conduct requested programs for scouting groups, highschool classes, senior groups, etc. Currently the existing facilities on the ranch are totally inadequate to properly support the above programs.

Bathroom Facilities:

The bathroom facilities consist of two portable chemical toilets and a water tap for washing hands. This is unsanitary and inadequate for large groups of people. The new building will include public restrooms.

Patwin Program:

For the Patwin program the children are given an introduction on the deck behind the information center and then walk approximately a quarter of a mile to the edge of the marsh. They are then divided into groups which rotate among six teaching stations. On average each year, on six or seven days, the children can not go to the marsh because of inclement weather. On these occasions the introduction takes place in the cold dark barn and the teaching stations are located in the barn, the blacksmith shop, the tractor shed and two small rooms in the information center. The children still have to walk from station to station in the rain. On these occasions it would be better to have the teaching stations in the new building.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

From time to time we have provided training for new docents. The space and seating in the small information center is inadequate even for small groups.

We have a library of books on Native American Culture and the ecology. These books are kept locked in a storage room in the information center, because the information center is always open to the public. In the new building there will be a room for the use docents so that the library will be available at all times.

We have always had a problem recruiting sufficient docents. Because we don't have enough docents we can only have the Patwin program one day a week. Each year we turn down requests from at least ten schools which would like to participate. We believe that if we had better facilities for the use of the docents and for the program, our recruiting efforts would be more successful. We would like to expand our program to two days a week. If we had more docents we could do this and we could double student participation to up to 3,000 per year.

Other Programs:

For bird, flower and marsh walks, the introduction generally takes place with a circle of people in the parking lot. The same is so for groups which have requested special programs at the ranch. The program would be so much better if we could have the introduction in the new building where we could use slides, charts or other materials to prepare the participants for the program. Slide shows take place in the barn. The barn is 100 years old and the boards in the walls have large spaces between them which let in too much light for good viewing.

At the annual open house we have participation by a number of individuals and groups. These include square dancers, musicians, and sheep dog and cattle maintenance demonstrations which are appropriately held outside. However other participants such as wool spinning, art sales and history talks would be better presented indoors.

In summary the availability of a new building for docent and program use would greatly increase the effectiveness of all of the programs which take place on the ranch.

Sincerely,



Don Taynton
Docent Coordinator

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



CENTER for LAND-BASED LEARNING

5265 Putah Creek Road
Winters, California 95694

530. 795-1520
Fax: 530. 795-4687

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Davis

JENNY LESTER

Project Coordinator,
American Farmland Trust

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United Auburn Indian Community

WILL ROGERS

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JOHN SCHARFFENBERGER

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VIC SINGH

County Administrative Officer,
Yolo County

JAN GOGGANS

California Scholar and Author

POPPY DAVIS

Risk Management Specialist, USDA

President

CRAIG MCNAMARA

Sierra Orchards

Director

MARY KIMBALL

www.landbasedlearning.org

February 8, 2006

TO: Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

FR: Dan Leroy
SLEWS Program Director
The Center for Land-Based Learning
5265 Putah Creek Road
Winters, CA

Dear Mr. Bosco:

I am writing in support of the Solano Land Trust's ongoing efforts to build a learning center at Rush Ranch Open Space. The learning center would be a valuable resource for our region and for my organization, the Center for Land-Based Learning.

The Center for Land-Based Learning has been working closely with the Solano Land Trust during the last year to implement our SLEWS Program at Lynch Canyon Open Space, another property owned and managed by the Trust. SLEWS engages local high school students in real habitat restoration projects in order to enhance classroom learning, develop life skills, and make a difference on the land. Through our partnership with the Solano Land Trust so far, 30 Environmental Science students from Rodriguez High School have planted hundreds of native trees, shrubs and grasses at their "adopted" site.

We are considering expanding our partnership with the Land Trust to include Rush Ranch and other projects. A learning center, complete with a classroom, bathrooms and food preparation area, would substantially improve our ability to conduct SLEWS at Rush Ranch. In addition, we could potentially offer the unique learning opportunities Rush Ranch affords to the 300-plus students from other participating SLEWS schools throughout the region. The site could also serve as a potential site for ongoing teacher development workshops, trainings and retreats.

We appreciate the great work Solano Land Trust has done to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. Feel free to get in touch with me if you need any additional information. I can be reached at (530) 795-1544, or dan@landbasedlearning.org.

Respectfully,

RECEIVED

MAR 06 2006

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



<http://www.solano.cc.ca.us>

February 17, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I am writing on behalf of the Solano Land Trust's application for funding from the State Coastal Conservancy to construct a learning center at Rush Ranch, which is located at the edge of Suisun Marsh in Solano County.

As a professor at Solano Community College I have been taking groups of students to Rush Ranch twice a year since soon after Rush Ranch was opened to the public. More recently, after being inspired during my sabbatical year (2003-2004) while working on the marsh with Robert Schroeter, a PhD. candidate with Dr. Peter Moyle's lab at UC Davis, my students have been gathering biological data from the marsh to better understand Suisun Marsh's role in the SF Bay/Delta ecosystem. Without Rush Ranch my students would not have the access they need to this important estuarine wetland. The enhancements that would be built if Solano Land Trust's application is funded will truly make Rush Ranch a regional educational center. The planned classroom would allow my students to be able to process samples from their fieldwork immediately and provide an area for indoor teaching. I'm also hopeful that we may be able to store equipment in the facility that would allow students to work on independent projects.

Rush Ranch, with its access to tidal and managed marsh, small and large slough habitat and its proximity to neighboring communities makes it the premier educational facility associated with Suisun Marsh. For this reason and all the ones stated above, I would strongly recommend that you grant Solano Land Trust's application for funding.

Respectfully,

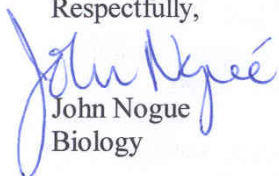

John Nogue
Biology

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



Date: February 12, 2006

<http://www.solano.edu>

TO: Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

FR: Marc Pandone
Solano Community College
4000 Suisun Valley Road
Fairfield CA 94534

Dear Mr. Bosco:

It has been very exciting news to hear that the Solano Land Trust is in the planning stages of developing a learning center at Rush Ranch. I am writing this letter of support of these efforts and to urge the State Coastal Conservancy to assist the Solano Land Trust in meeting this goal.

I have been a Professor of Art at Solano College since 1990, and have adopted the Rush Ranch site as my personal classroom. In fact, I just presented a short workshop this past January to faculty and staff at the college on the outdoor classroom and travel trips, in which Rush Ranch was featured as one of the integral sites in my curriculum. I have found that all the Land trust sites are an invaluable asset to my instruction and, more importantly, to the community.

Each year, I teach at least two sections of the class "Drawing and Painting from Nature." While this class is presented under the Fine arts heading, the course involves a fair amount of natural and environmental lessons. Students are challenged to draw or paint from nature but are presented material that heightens their awareness of the local landscape, its rich heritage and the value of its preservation. For many of my students this is often the first time they have explored their county in this manner, and for most it is their first visit to Rush Ranch. Most find the austere remoteness of the ranch, yet its seemingly close proximity to nearby towns and cities, a curious paradox. That paradox becomes a key to deep and enduring learning experiences, which linger in the consciousness of individuals and the group as a whole. This is why I have used the Rush Ranch site extensively over the years and find the prospects of an expanded facility on the site so thrilling.

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



While I have taken at least 40-60 students per year to Rush Ranch, with multiple visits per group, I am also aware of instructors in the Photography Department at Solano College who over the years have made repeated trips to the ranch to capture subject matter for various assignments. In addition, there are a few English Instructors who have projects with a focus on nature and the environment who have found access to the ranch integral to their teaching. I mention these to emphasize the importance Rush Ranch plays in the course work at Solano College. In fact, a class I co-taught with a poet from the college in 1996 used Rush Ranch as a focal point of many lessons.

I have presented these various examples simply to illustrate how widely used Rush Ranch is as an educational venue. But more importantly, Rush Ranch is an inspiration to both younger and older generations. At a time when our society appears to grow further disconnected from nature, let alone understanding it and respecting its worth, Rush Ranch has provided an important service to the community and region.

The highly qualified staff, both in the offices and in the field, is dedicated to their mission and stewardship of the property. Over the years the interns and volunteer groups have filled an invaluable niche to bring informed and quality experiences to all the visitors of the ranch. I see the completion of the Learning Center as a keystone project that will benefit countless students and visitors yearly, and which will in no doubt become a destination trip that will draw visitors from outside the region and around the state.

I am reminded of the day that a student stood in awe as she watched a hawk hunt above the grasslands, soaring and ultimately diving full speed towards the ground. It curved into the tall grasses, pulling up with what appeared to be a field mouse. She gasped and said, "I had no idea." Mount Diablo sat on the distant horizon, a few clouds scraping its ridges. A stiff breeze rustled the student's art pad as she quickly began to take notes and draw. This illuminates the worth of the outdoor classroom, and the rich potential of having a learning resource center located at Rush Ranch.

It is my hope and wish that the Coastal Conservancy will find this valuable project fully worthy of funding.

I remain available for questions or further comments.

Sincerely

Marc Pandone

Professor of Art

Marc.pandone@solano.edu

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support



RECEIVED
FEB 23 2006
SOLANO LAND TRUST

Rush Ranch Educational Council
Attn: Ken Poerner
P.O. Box 115
Fairfield, Ca 94533

Tuesday, January 24, 2006

Dear Mr. Poerner,

It is our understanding that Rush Ranch will be constructing a building to allow for groups to meet and conduct seminars, etc.

The Vacaville Art League would is very interested in the prospect of this opportunity. As a local non-profit group, we are always in need of quality space for artistic endeavors. With over 150 exhibiting local and regional artists in our membership, we would have contact with individuals interested in utilizing this space for private art classes, or as a League we would entertain the possibility of conducting workshops.

The creation of a classroom space at Rush Ranch would be a welcome addition to our communities and great opportunity for the local non-profit art groups.

Sincerely,

Judy Neal
President
Vacaville Art League

718 East Monte Vista Avenue, Vacaville, California 95688 707-448-8712

Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

Peter R. Hymans,
(Member; W.E.T.S.U. Men's Division)
P.O. Box 367 Gridley, CA 95948
Cell: 530 624-5269

February 6, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco
Chairman, Governing Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Sir:

W.E.T.S.U. Men's Division is a group of men whose purpose is: "To create a place where men are empowered to be honorable and successful through training and service so that we make a difference in ourselves, our families and the world."

For several years, in coordination with Mr. Ken Poerner of the Solano Land Trust, we have been regular users of Rush Ranch for nighttime meetings, with attendance ranging from the high teens, to over fifty persons.

The spacious, natural, outdoors venue is beautiful and very conducive to the success of the masculine communications and activities we so much enjoy. The location is perfect in that it feels remote and secluded, while it's less than an hour and a half from Sacramento, Stockton or the Bay Area.

A blazing glow from in the fire-ring amplifies the context of whatever we do and is something we always look forward to enjoying.

On rainy nights we have been allowed the use of the barn's interior. This is troublesome for a few men who have asthma, because of the dust. A meeting room would be a real plus.

Each of us in W.E.T.S.U. is very grateful for the relationship we have with Solano Land Trust and for the use of Rush Ranch. We are anxious to support the prospective growth of the site in any way possible. Improvements to the facilities will add to its attractiveness and we would use the facility more frequently.

If we can do anything to assist in this process, please feel free to contact me, or our leader, Mr. Azul Herrera (email; azulherrera@hotmail.com) or his administrative assistant, Mr. Chris Sunia (email; csunia@comcast.net).

Sincerely,



Peter R. Hymans,
On behalf of W.E.T.S.U. Men's Division